



# LIFELINK

## NEWSLETTER

### Page 1

Suicide Prevention Month  
Every Sailor, Every Day Posters  
News You Can Use

### Page 2

LifeLink Spotlight  
Resilience Corner

### Page 3

Postvention is Prevention  
Upcoming Events  
News You Can Use

## GEARING UP FOR 2014 SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH

Suicide prevention goes beyond training people to recognize risk factors or what to do in a crisis. It starts with every day actions we can all take to build meaningful connections with our shipmates, staying actively engaged and making sure they know they're never alone. **The theme of 2014 Navy Suicide Prevention Month is *Every Sailor, Every Day*, focusing on peer connections and personal responsibility.** Vice Adm. Matthew L. Nathan, Navy Surgeon General, publicly introduced this message in an October 2013 [All Hands Magazine](#) article, imploring Sailors to strengthen their connections with one another and "break the code of silence" when it comes to discussions that may prevent suicide.

To that end, *Every Sailor, Every Day* messaging for Suicide Prevention Month will promote open communication between shipmates to encourage ongoing support and involvement during both calm waters and rough seas. Every day, we each have the opportunity to be there for our shipmates—and ourselves. By taking simple steps to promote personal resilience (taking care of our physical health and seeking support for stress issues), we can lead by example.

Navy Suicide Prevention Month is a launch-pad for continuous engagement at the deckplate level throughout the year. **There is no mandatory project or activity for 2014 Suicide Prevention Month.** Rather, to emphasize ongoing engagement and underscore the *Every Sailor, Every Day* concept, commands are encouraged to utilize Navy Suicide Prevention Month products and messaging to tailor efforts at the deckplate, encouraging open communication, personal wellness, peer support and bystander intervention skills all year long.

Accompanying the rollout of the updated Suicide Prevention Month page on [suicide.navy.mil](http://suicide.navy.mil) in mid-August, command Suicide Prevention Coordinators (SPC) will receive initial resources via email to help kick-off locally tailored efforts. Throughout the month of September, the Navy Suicide Prevention Branch will release supporting products including information sheets, blog posts, social media messages, videos and more. Navy Suicide Prevention has also partnered with Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center this year to offer additional resources, including a targeted training webinar for SPCs, Health Promotion Coordinators and other key influencers on new and updated tools to enhance local suicide prevention efforts. Bookmark Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center's Health Promotion and Wellness department [webpage](#) for more information.

Together, we can make a difference. It's about being there for *Every Sailor, Every Day*.

### Every Sailor, Every Day



Every day, each of us has the opportunity to encourage and support fellow Sailors and Marines.

Click the thumbnail above to download printable "Every Sailor, Every Day" posters for Suicide Prevention Month from Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center. For additional resources, visit [suicide.navy.mil](http://suicide.navy.mil).

### NEWS YOU CAN USE

Break the Cycle of Debt and Rebuild Your Finances, Pt. 1  
[NavyNavStress](#)

Stress Eating [NavyNavStress](#)

Peer to Peer, Beyond the Pier [NavyNavStress](#)

Video Profile: 1st Sgt. Simon Sandoval [Real Warriors](#)

Military Suicides Up a Bit in 2014; More Seek Help  
[Associated Press](#)

# LIFELINK NEWSLETTER

## LIFELINK SPOTLIGHT

### *Connecting the Dots to Save a Life*

This month we're spotlighting a true story of bystander intervention that was made possible by dedicated efforts to "connect the dots," bridging pieces of information from different resources together to ultimately save a life. Together, we can be there for "every Sailor, every day."

Recently, a Sailor was convicted at General Court-Martial. After being released on his own recognizance while awaiting sentencing, he failed to muster on the morning of the hearing. The Sailor's command became concerned and notified Naval Criminal Investigative Services (NCIS). NCIS agents, working with first responders from the local police department, were able to contact a close friend of the Sailor. The friend informed the agents about recent text messages with the Sailor that indicated hopelessness, despair, and suicide risk. The team of agents and first responders were able to locate the Sailor and get him to immediate treatment, intervening at a critical moment to save a life.

### *Meet Navy's New Resilience Chief*



In June, the Navy welcomed its new resilience chief, Capt. Mike Smith. Prior to joining the 21st Century Sailor Office as Director, Navy Suicide Prevention Branch, Capt. Smith (a P-3 Naval Flight Officer) served as Commanding Officer, Office of Naval Research Global in Singapore.

Capt. Smith fully recognizes our Navy's success is measured by the achievements, success and readiness of our Sailors. "As the Navy's mission inherently causes our Sailors to function in an ever-changing environment, we must encourage stress navigation tools that allow them to thrive—both at work and at home," he says. "I look forward to being a part of the programs that provide these tools to the Fleet, encouraging healthy stress navigation strategies, early recognition of stressors and reinforcing a culture supportive of seeking help. Every Sailor, Every Day!" Read Capt. Smith's bio [here](#).

## RESILIENCE CORNER

### *In Case You Missed It: When to Take Stress Seriously*

The following post appeared on [www.NavyNavStress.com](http://www.NavyNavStress.com) during 2012 Suicide Prevention Month. This year as we focus on peer relationships and ways to be there for "Every Sailor, Every Day," it's important to recognize when and how to start the conversation about stress and suicide when a shipmate is having difficulty. While stress issues are no laughing matter (we don't suggest dressing up as a clown when starting a serious conversation with your buddy!), rereading this post may help you feel more comfortable assisting your shipmate in getting to the right resources. Lighthearted humor can help us break down our own barriers to help others—and ourselves. Follow [www.NavyNavStress.com](http://www.NavyNavStress.com) for 2014 Suicide Prevention Month posts.

Laughter is good medicine for stress relief...but knowing which resources are appropriate when your shipmate is in distress may save a life. Trying to maintain a positive outlook and taking a moment to smile and laugh is a good practice to get from the yellow zone back to the green. However, when stressors start to pile up and have a more serious impact on our lives, professional treatment and resources may be necessary.



Cartoon illustrated by Jeff Bacon for Navy Suicide Prevention.

If your shipmate expresses thoughts of hopelessness, purposelessness, or despair, take it seriously. These statements may be subtle warning signs of potentially harmful behavior. Even if you think he or she is joking or speaking casually, statements expressing thoughts of suicide are serious. Familiarize yourself with the available resources and ACT. Ask if the Sailor is thinking about suicide. Show that you *Care*. Don't wait to get him or her to *Treatment* to receive the proper assistance (take them to the Chaplain, to medical or the ER. If immediate danger is present, call 911). And always support your shipmate by following up and checking to see how things are going—maybe a good laugh will help him or her return to a positive hopeful outlook on life.

Help is always available. Call 1-800-273-TALK (option 1), text 838255 from a mobile phone or visit [www.veteranscrisisline.net](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net).

# LIFELINK NEWSLETTER



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### World Suicide Prevention Day

September 10

### National Suicide Prevention Week

September 8-14

### Suicide Prevention Month (DoD)

September

### SPC Basic Training Webinar

August 13

August 26

[Register Here!](#)

Contact Navy Suicide Prevention

[Email Us](#) | [Website](#)

Follow Operational Stress  
Control Online...



## POSTVENTION IS PREVENTION

Losing a shipmate to suicide is one of the most difficult situations Sailors may face. In the aftermath, finding balance between the grief process and mission demands can be challenging. It's important for our Navy family to recognize how postvention efforts can serve as psychological first aid to shipmates and loved ones.

**Postvention refers to actions that occur after a suicide to support shipmates and family affected by the loss.** Examples of postvention efforts may include thoughtfully informing Sailors about the death to minimize speculation, one-on-one outreach to those most affected by the suicide, encouraging utilization of support resources and monitoring for reactions.

For a command that has experienced a suicide, fostering a supportive environment is vital to sustaining psychological and emotional resilience. For many, the impact of suicide will not go away just because the memorial service is over and duty calls again. The Five Principles of Resilience can assist with the recovery process following a suicide, helping to promote a healthy grieving process and return to mission-readiness.

- **Predictability** – While suicide is not predictable, a command's commitment to a healthy and supportive environment can be. Encourage your shipmates to speak up when they are down, and ensure that support resources are in place and accessible.
- **Controllability** – After a suicide, it's normal for things to seem out of your control. The grieving process may seem overwhelming at times. To allow yourself time to regroup, it's ok to set limits and say no to things that may hamper the healing process.
- **Relationships** – Our connections with peers and loved ones can be protective factors during challenging times. Take a moment out of each day to ask how your shipmates are doing—and actively listen. Be there for *Every Sailor, Every Day*.
- **Trust** – The presence of trust before and after a tragedy promotes a supportive command climate and can help preserve mission-readiness while promoting emotional health.
- **Meaning** – Following a suicide, it's common to search for answers. While you may never understand what led to the tragedy, support from shipmates and leaders can strengthen the recovery process by sharing meaning and fostering hope.

Postvention is prevention. For more postvention resources, visit the [Suicide Prevention Resource Center](#) or visit the Tragedy Assistance Program at [www.taps.org](http://www.taps.org).

## MORE NEWS YOU CAN USE

Resilient Families = Strong Families: Resiliency Training May Help Your Home Life Too [Military Pathways](#)

Tips for Forming Preventive-Health Habits [Navy Medicine Live](#)

5 Things Sailors Need to Know about Bystander Intervention Training [Navy Live](#)

Returning Home: Service Members, Families Discuss Reintegration Experiences [DCoE Blog](#)

CNO: Chaplains and RPs Integral to Fleet Readiness [Navy.mil](#)

An App a Day to Optimize Your Psychological Health [Navy Medicine Live](#)